REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the particularity with which the Examiner has now explained the rejections of the remaining independent Claims 1, 20, and 39 under 35 USC Sec. 102(e) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,779,051 to Basil et al. (hereinafter "Basil"). Independent Claims 1, 20, and 39 have been amended herein to clarify their patentable distinctions over Basil. New Claims 58-63 are directed to subject matter having further independent bases for patentability over Basil.

Applicants have carefully reviewed Basil and submit that Basil does not anticipate independent Claims 1, 20, and 39, and many of the dependent claims for at least the reasons that will now be explained.

Claim 1 has been amended to recite (emphasis added):

> 1.   (Currently Amended) A method for providing secure communications over a network in a distributed workload environment having <u>target hosts associated with a common network address and which are accessed through a distribution processor by a common network address</u>, the method comprising the steps of:
> routing both inbound and outbound communications with target hosts which are associated with a secure network communication through the distribution processor;
> processing both inbound and outbound secure network communications at the distribution processor so as to provide network security processing of communications from the target host and network security processing of communications to the target host;
> receiving at the distribution processor, network communications directed to the common network address; and
> <u>distributing the received network communications that are directed to the common network address among selected ones of the target hosts, wherein the selection among the target hosts is carried out so as to distribute workload associated with the network communications among the target hosts.</u>

Applicants submit that nowhere does Basil disclose at least the above-underlined recitations of Claim 1. Applicants note that the Examiner has contended at Page 3 of the Final Office Action that Basil discloses distribution of workload associated with network communications at Col. 3, lines 31-54. However, the cited portion of Basil discloses the following (emphasis added):

Memory 13 also stores an address table 13a and a routing table 13d. In this regard, <u>each device has several associated addresses</u>. For example, device 12 has an address 35 which includes a logical IP address 35a of "200.10.1.1", and a physical IP address 35b of "192.115.65.12". The multicast address 35c ("232.10.5.1") of GRE tunnel 24 is also shown, as are addresses of devices 14 and 16.

<u>Routing table 13d stores network routing information, including the logical IP addresses of devices 12, 14, and 16. Routing table 13d is used by routing instructions 13c to route packets. Address table 13a stores the **physical IP addresses of devices 12, 14 and 16 which map to corresponding logical IP addresses in routing table 13d**</u>.

Accordingly, the cited portion of Basil discloses a multicast system that uses a multicast address to forward a multicast packet to many devices. In particular, the mapping of the multicast address to the devices is <u>static</u>, as defined by the physical IP address to logic IP address routing table 13d. Basil further describes this <u>static</u> mapping of multicast address to devices as follows:

Each tunnel has a <u>multicast address</u>. <u>Each tunnel end point device [has] a physical IP address and a logical IP address. The logical IP address is an IP address that is **statically configured** over a GRE tunnel end point device</u>. The physical IP address is the network (IP) address of the end point device and is used by the delivery protocol to deliver data packets through GRE tunnels to remote devices.
(Basil, Col. 3, lines 14-20, emphasis added).

Thus, Basil describes a multicast protocol in which multicast addresses are <u>statically mapped</u> to logical IP addresses.

Nowhere does Basil describe that the mapping of multicast addresses to logical IP addresses can be modified dynamically to distribute workload associated with the network communications among end point devices associated with a common multicast address. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Basil does not describe or suggest at least the recitation of Claim 1 of a distribution processor that distributes received network communications that are directed to a common network address among selected ones of the target hosts associated with the common network address, where the selection among the target hosts is carried out so as to distribute workload associated with the network communications among the target hosts.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that at least the above-underlined recitations of amended Claim 1 are not disclosed by Basil and, consequently, that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Basil.

Independent Claims 20 and 39 are system and computer program product claims that have been amended to include recitations that correspond to the method of Claim 1, and are submitted to not be anticipated by Basil for at least the reasons explained above for Claim 1.

New Claims 58-63 have been added to further emphasize further aspects of the workload distribution, and are submitted to provide subject matter having independent bases for patentability over Basil.

Claims 58 recites:

> 58.   (New) The method according to Claim 1, wherein distributing the received network communications that are directed to the common IP address among selected ones of the target hosts comprises:
> selecting among the target hosts for distribution of the network communications in response to a predefined selection pattern to distribute workload associated with the network communications among the target hosts.

Basil discloses a static mapping of multicast addresses to logical IP address, and contains no discussion of selecting among target hosts for distribution of the network communications in response to a predefined selection pattern to distribute workload associated with the network communications among the target hosts. Accordingly, Applicants submit that Basil does not anticipate Claim 58 or Claim 61, which contains similar recitations to Claim 58.

Claim 59 recites that a round-robin pattern is used to select among the target hosts for distribution of the network communications utilizing a common network address. Basil does not disclose use of a round-robin pattern to select among the target hosts for distribution of the network communications utilizing a common network address. Accordingly, Basil does not anticipate Claim 59 or Claim 62, which contains similar recitations to Claim 59.

Claim 60 recites that dynamic criteria are used which change over time to distribute workload associated with the network communications among the target hosts. Basil does not disclose use of the recited dynamic criteria to distribute
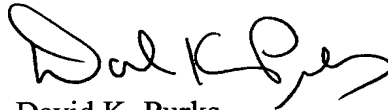
workload associated with the network communications. Accordingly, Basil does not anticipate Claim 60 or Claim 63, which contains similar recitations to Claim 60.

CONCLUSION

Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are patentable over the cited reference for at least the reasons stated herein. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (919) 854-1400.

Respectfully submitted,

David K. Purks
Registration No. 40,133
Attorney for Applicant(s)

USPTO Customer No. 46589
Myers Bigel Sibley & Sajovec, P.A.
P. O. Box 37428
Raleigh, North Carolina 27627
Telephone: 919/854-1400
Facsimile: 919/854-1401